

INVITATION TO DANIEL O'CONNELL, ESQ. M.P.

The Letter of the Council of the Northern Political Union, to Daniel O'Connell, Esq. M. P.

Eldon Coffee Rooms, Newcastle upon Tyne, March 23, 1833.

DEAR SIR,

WE have observed, with singular satisfaction, at this gloomy period, the announcement of your intention to visit our chief constituencies, for the purpose of pleading, in the presence of the English People, the cause of Ireland, justice, and the constitution, now shamefully threatened to be trampled on by depositories of that People's trust; for the purpose of appealing from a doubtful expression of the public will, deduced through the perhaps perverted channels of political authority, to that unequivocal demonstration, which may be assuredly derived from the voice of that People, as by themselves expressed, and as "constituting the only legitimate source of such authority itself."

In declaring the gratification we experience in the prospect of this just, this generous, this suitable appeal, we deem it worthy to be observed that we have clothed our feeling of its nature, in the very words in which the members of a certain false and hateful faction, called the WHIGS, have, many times expressed it; not, indeed, as deriving any weight from their authority, EXCEPT ALONE AS AGAINST THEMSELVES, but solely in memorial and mockery of their present shame. Such, however, must always be the fate of hypocrites, that every upright word CONDEMNS THEIR ACTIONS, as every guilty deed BELIES THEIR WORDS! "out of their own mouths let them be judged."

Yes, sir; you have, indeed, adopted a noble, a patriotic, a magnanimous resolve: one which is worthy of yourself, your country, and your cause; and one to which our countrymen will no less worthily respond. Yes; come, sir, and be yourself a witness of our feelings; come, and on evidence of eyes and ears, give attestation of our justice and our sympathy. Judge if the hearts of Englishmen in northern latitudes, be cold to freedom as their clime. And hear, still further northwards, hear with what ardent energy the soul of Scotland (whom for her zeal and generosity we love and honour, as equal to our mother-land,) hear, with what indignant accents, her impassioned sons repudiate the slander

that measures of coercion and of violence, that assumptions of illegal authority, that usurpations of legislative omnipotence, above the constitution, and abrogatory of the fundamental principles of our social compact, CAN EVER HAVE BEEN ADOPTED BY AN INDEED REFORMED REPRESENTATION OF THE COMMONS OF THIS REALM!

Sir, you shall hear the shouts of our assembled thousands; we will give it you, if you please, under the hand-writing of our honest millions THAT WE, THE PEOPLE, are not the Tyrants of your country; that WE feel your oppressions resentfully, as not only an outrage upon YOUR rights, but as the result and indication of a CONSPIRACY AGAINST OUR OWN; and that we do too seriously presage a near approaching conflict, between the selfish and hateful genius of aristocracy, for the retention and consolidation of an usurped dominion, and the public spirit of a kingdom, determined, as is its right and duty, to be free.

Wonder not, sir, that we address you, though personally strangers, in the familiar language of affection and esteem. Are we not united, in a sacred brotherhood, by love of justice? Is it nothing that we feel ourselves your comrades in the cause of liberty? Are we to be forgetful of your service, so long and powerful, to that holy cause? or, when, on behalf of a noble section of the English People, we stretch out the hand of fraternal sympathy to you, sir, as nobly representing the People of long trampled on Ireland, would it be right, be suitable, to do so, with cold, with formal, with punctilious respect? No; no; we can no otherwise subscribe ourselves, than as, Dear Sir,

Your friends, and friends of Ireland,

Signed by order and on behalf of the Council of the Northern Political Union. } CHARLES ATTWOOD, Treasurer.
THOMAS DOUBLEDAY, Secretary.
JOHN FIFE, Honorary Secretary.
CHARLES LARKIN, Secretary.

Mr. O'Connell's Reply.

TO THE MEMBERS OF
"THE NORTHERN POLITICAL UNION."

London, 27th March, 1833.

BROTHER REFORMERS,

I beg leave to acknowledge the honour of your communication under date of the 23rd inst.

I thank you heartily for the personal kindness, which that communication contains, but I thank you infinitely more for the high-minded sympathy, which you thus exhibit for the long oppressed and now about to be enslaved People of unhappy Ireland.

I agree entirely with your opinions of that BASE PARTY called "WHIGS." They in my judgment entertain a more envenomed dislike to free institutions and popular liberty than any other party, which this country ever produced. They have a more ravenous and insatiable appetite for PUBLIC PLUNDER AND PECULATION of every description than the TORIERS, and to cap the climax of their DEPRAVITY, they add all the meanness of HYPOCRISY to their other VICIES. They pretend, forsooth, to be the friends of the PEOPLE, whilst, in fact, they are their most UNRELENTING ENEMIES.

They have in the instance of IRELAND trampled on the first and most sacred principles of the constitution.

They have ANNIHILATED the CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHT OF PUBLIC PETITIONING FOR REDRESS OF PUBLIC GRIEVANCES however afflicting, or OF OPPRESSIONS however grinding and intolerable. A BASHAW, under the name of a Lord Lieutenant or chief governor is to have the power to suppress any popular meeting, however necessary, however peaceable, however salutary!

If this be not DESPOTISM over the free and effectual expression of public opinion, I know not what despotism is!

Recollect, that which gave England a preeminence in the assertion of the principles of human liberty, was the unquestionable right to discuss freely and publicly every act, matter or thing, which could infringe individual or public justice, or which could involve any injury to person or property, or violate any constitutional privilege.

This was the prerogative—the proud prerogative of Englishmen in the worst of times. It is true this prerogative has been more than once invaded—but that invasion cost one TYRANT KING his head, and another bigotted CROWNED OPPRESSOR his throne. The prerogative of the English PEOPLE survived both—and has hitherto been considered as part of THE TITLE of the illustrious family now on the throne and deemed the most SACRED and INVIOLEABLE of POPULAR RIGHTS.

Alas! for my unfortunate countrymen! A REFORMED PARLIAMENT is about to deprive them of this sacred right, and to hand them over to the discretion—that is to the caprice of any foolish Lord Lieutenant or angry and ferocious secretary!

There are, it is true, crimes committed in Ireland of an atrocious nature. There are districts in which the wretched peasantry are the victims and some of them the instruments of an agrarian civil war of a most criminal description. None of us seek to protect or palliate these crimes. We know by practical experience that they could easily be suppressed by the ordinary powers of the law vigorously and at the same time humanely exercised. But, Brother Reformers! it is not in these disturbed districts; it is in the most peaceable and the most cultivated portions of our fertile and populous Island, that this discretion, this caprice is vested in the Lord Lieutenant. The crimes, to which I allude, serve merely as a pretext to deceive and delude the English nation. If the government had intended to foster those disturbances and to keep them alive in order to afford a pretext for obtaining a complete DESPOTISM over the peaceable districts, they would take precisely the

course they have done. I do not accuse them of such hideous intention, having no direct proof to adduce, but I do accuse them of not having sooner—as I am convinced they might have sooner done—suppressed and extinguished those disturbances and rendered the disturbed districts tranquil and free from crime.

Again—THE TRIAL BY JURY IS SUPPRESSED—and a species of military tribunal something distinct from a court martial substituted in its place.—Am I awake, Englishmen! or do I only dream? Alas! It is a horrible waking dream! Men calling themselves REFORMERS! Having the boldness to call themselves REFORMERS!! vote down the TRIAL BY JURY—the sacred palladium of life and liberty, the protection against oppression—the avenging scourge of the really guilty—the fostering shield of the really innocent—REFORMERS SO CALLED!!! trample on the TRIAL BY JURY and set up a hideous anomaly of a revolutionary tribunal, neither a civil court nor a court martial, but a mis-begotten mongrel, having all the bad qualities of both, and none of the good qualities of either!!!

Englishmen! Are these your REFORMERS?—Are these the men to give you, what you call for and want,—FREE INSTITUTIONS AND CHEAP GOVERNMENT?

But is this all? No such thing. The HABEAS CORPUS—which makes slavery as nearly impossible as your present laws can make it—is disregarded and partially at least set aside. Whilst the most unlimited indemnity is given to all acts of the military—who—"tell it not in Gath—publish it not in the streets of Ascalon"—are made responsible only to courts martial! Do you understand this, Englishmen? The military set loose under this hideous act in a proclaimed district are not subject to any indictment—are not liable to any action for damages. DO WHAT THEY WILL in execution of this act, they are responsible to neither judge or jury, civil or criminal. They are answerable only to a COURT MARTIAL.

TO A COURT MARTIAL!! ONLY to a court martial!!!

My heart throbs—my blood boils—I cannot look at this act without excitement too powerful for endurance! I cannot believe that I am awake and that really and in sober sadness, the men who fabricate and support this law venture on so bold a step as to call themselves "REFORMERS"!! REFORMERS!! BAH!!!

Englishmen! I have scarcely temper to notice, that atrocious as the measure now is, it has lost some of its hideous features since it came into the House of Commons—that it left the paternal hands of EARL GREY, WHOSE FAMILY ARE FASTENED LIKE LEECHES ON THE PUBLIC PURSE—it left his paternal hand—it left the political sanctimony of the OVERRATED BUT SOON TO BE SURELY DISCOVERED BROUGHAM, in a shape so insufferably tyrannical, that even "THE WHIGS" have shrunk from its contamination, and it will stalk abroad at last AN IMP of minor, but still exquisite deformity.

My other duties call me to terminate this letter. I cannot conclude without again expressing my delight at your kindness and sympathy, and assuring you, that if any opportunity shall be afforded me of thanking you in person, I will gladly avail myself of it.

I have the honour to be,
Brother reformers,
Your very faithful
And obedient servant,

DANIEL O'CONNELL.

To the Members of the Northern Political Union.

ENEAS MACKENZIE, PRINTER, NEWCASTLE.

